

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 08427 310849Z

21

ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 NEA-10 IO-10 L-03 H-02 PRS-01

PA-01 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15

STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00

USIA-06 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 /102 W

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R 310634Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3625

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

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MANILA FOR USADB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXP KS

SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECT - SAMRANGJIN PUMPED STORAGE PROJECT

REF: STATE 257696

1. BLANC HAS ALREADY BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE EMBASSY SUGGESTING UNFAIR TREATMENT IDENTICAL TO THAT OUTLINED IN REFTEL. AT BLANC'S REQUEST, ECON COUNSELOR SAW KECO PRESIDENT MIN YESTERDAY, TO EXPRESS OUR INTEREST.

2. FYI: SUBSEQUENT TO HIS FIRST STORIES, BLANC REPORTED THAT HE HAD LEARNED FROM LOW LEVEL SOURCES IN KECO THAT NIPPON KOEI HAD WON THE FIRST ADJUDICATION BY KECO BUT THAT THE ADB HAD RETURNED IT FOR FURTHER STUDY SINCE NIPPON KOEI HAD THREE OTHER HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS IN KOREA INCLUDING A PUMPED STORAGE PROJECT. BLANC IMPLIED THAT THE ADB WAS SUGGESTING BLATENT FAVORATISM BY KECO AND THAT THE PRESIDENT OF KECO DURING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION WAS NOW THE PRESIDENT OF NIPPON KOEI.

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3. FYI: PRESIDENT MIN TOLD THE ECON COUNSELOR THAT THE SWISS

EMBASSY HAD BEEN CONTINUOUSLY ON HIS BACK ABOUT THIS AWARD. HE NOTED THAT ALL THREE FIRMS WERE HIGHLY QUALIFIED. HE THOUGHT THE JAPANESE FIRM HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING CLOSE TO ITS HOME BASE, SO ITS COSTS WOULD BE LOWER AND IT COULD RESPOND MORE RAPIDLY. IT WAS ALSO ALREADY MOBILIZED ON THE FIRST PROJECT AND KNEW ITS WAY AROUND KOREA. HE TOOK NOTE OF THE EMBASSY'S EXPRESSION OF INTEREST AND SUPPORT FOR MAIN BUT ALSO WAS AWARE THAT WE WOULD WANT KECO TO DO WHAT WAS BEST FOR IT AND KOREA. END FYI.

4. BLANC PLANS TO STAY IN KOREA INTO NEXT WEEK AND IS CONSULTING WITH HIS KOREAN PARTNERS, KOREAN ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS LTD. (KECL), WHOSE PRESIDENT IS A FRIEND OF MIN'S. HE HAS ALSO ASKED TO SEE USADB DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE PAPP WHEN HE COMES HERE NEXT WEEK. WE HAVE TOLD BLANC THAT WE SEE NO GROUNDS FOR THE EMBASSY TO INTERVENE FURTHER AT THIS TIME.
SNEIDER

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